

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A magnetic fastener (10) comprising:
 - a first flap (12) of material having an inside (16) and an exterior (18);
 - 5 a second flap (14) of material having an outside (20) and an interior (22);
 - a magnetic assembly (24) having a first portion (56) attached to said first flap (12) and a second portion (58) attached to said second flap (14) for interconnecting said first flap (12) to said second flap (14);
 - 10 said magnetic fastener (10) characterized by a handle (30) attached to said exterior (18) of said first flap (12) and directly interconnected with said first portion (56) of said magnetic assembly (24) for allowing a person to grasp said handle (30) and operate said magnetic assembly (24).
- 15 2. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 1 wherein said handle (30) is further defined as a button (32) for ornamental purposes.
3. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 2 further including a buttonhole stitch (34) on said first flap (12) for creating the appearance of a standard
20 button-to-buttonhole assembly.

4. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first portion (56) of said magnetic assembly (24) is further defined as a magnet (26) forming a magnetic field and attached to said inside (16) of said first flap (12).

5 5. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 4 wherein said second portion (58) is further defined as a magnetic element (28) formed of a magnetically attractive material and attached to said outside (20) of said second flap (14) for receiving said magnet (26).

10 6. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 5 wherein said magnet (26) includes at least two magnet apertures (36) disposed therein and further including a first thread (38) passing through said magnet apertures (36) for attaching said magnet (26) to said inside (16) of said first flap (12).

15 7. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 6 wherein said handle (30) is further defined as a button (32).

8. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 7 wherein said button (32) includes at least two button apertures (40) for receiving said first thread (38) and
20 attaching said button (32) to said exterior (18) of said first flap (12).

9. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 8 wherein said button apertures (40) align with said magnet apertures (36) for allowing said first thread (38) to pass through both of said button apertures (40) and said magnet apertures (36).

5 10. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 7 wherein said button (32) includes a loop (46) for receiving said first thread (38) and attaching said button (32) to said exterior (18) of said first flap (12).

10 11. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 5 wherein said magnetic element (28) includes at least two magnetic element apertures (42) disposed therein, and further including a second thread (44) passing through said magnetic element apertures (42) for attaching said magnetic element (28) to said outside (20) of said second flap (14).

15 12. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 5 wherein said magnetic element (28) includes a peripheral wall portion (48) and a planer wall portion (50) defining a cavity (52) for receiving said magnet (26).

20 13. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 12 wherein said magnetic element (28) further includes a flange portion (54) extending outwardly from said peripheral wall portion (48) for contacting said magnet (26) during operation of said magnetic fastener such that said magnet (26) can be guided into said cavity (52).

14. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 12 wherein said magnetic element (28) further includes at least one tab (49) protruding inward from said peripheral wall portion (48) to further secure said magnet (26) in said cavity (52).

5 15. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 4 wherein said magnet (26) is a permanent magnet which forms said magnetic field.

16. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 4 wherein said magnet (26) includes a coating for preventing corrosion of said magnet (26).

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17. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 5 wherein said magnetic element (28) is formed of a metal.

18. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 7 wherein said button
15 (32) is formed of a non-magnetic material.

19. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 18 wherein said button (32) is formed of plastic.

20. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first portion (56) of said magnetic assembly (24) is defined as a magnetic element (28) formed of a magnetically attractive material and attached to said inside (16) of said first flap (12) for receiving said second portion (58).

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21. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 20 wherein said second portion (58) of said magnetic assembly (24) is further defined as a magnet (26) attached to said outside (20) of said second flap (14).

10 22. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 20 wherein said magnetic element (28) includes at least two magnetic element apertures (42) disposed therein, and a first thread (38) passing through said magnetic element apertures (42) for attaching said magnetic element (28) to said inside (16) of said first flap (12).

15 23. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 22 wherein said handle (30) is further defined as a button (32).

24. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 23 wherein said button (32) includes at least two button apertures (40) for receiving said first thread (38) and
20 attaching said button (32) to said exterior (18) of said first flap (12).

25. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 24 wherein said button apertures (40) align with said magnetic element apertures (42) for allowing said first thread (38) to pass through both of said button apertures (40) and said magnetic element apertures (42).

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26. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 23 said button (32) includes a loop (46) for receiving said first thread (38) and attaching said button (32) to said exterior (18) of said first flap (12).

10 27. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 21 wherein at least two magnet apertures (36) are disposed through said magnet (26), and a second thread (44) passes through said magnet apertures (36) for attaching said magnet (26) to said outside (20) of said second flap (14).

15 28. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 20 wherein said magnetic element (28) includes a peripheral wall portion (48) and a planer wall portion (50) defining a cavity (52) for receiving said magnet (26).

20 29. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 28 wherein said magnetic element (28) further includes a flange portion (54) extending outwardly from said peripheral wall portion (48) for making contact with said magnet (26) so said magnet (26) can be guided into said cavity (52).

30. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 28 wherein said magnetic element (28) further includes at least one tab (49) protruding inward from said peripheral wall portion (48) to further secure said magnet (26) in said cavity (52).

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31. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 21 wherein said magnet (26) is a permanent magnet which forms said magnetic field.

32. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 21 wherein said magnet
10 (26) includes a coating for preventing corrosion of said magnet (26).

33. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 20 wherein said magnetic element (28) is formed of a metal.

15 34. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 23 wherein said button (32) is formed of a non-magnetic material.

35. A magnetic fastener (10) as set forth in claim 34 wherein said button (32) is formed of plastic.